

## THE SON MY MASSACRE

### A Horrible Crime

#### D.R.V.N. FOREIGN MINISTRY DENOUNCES

Excerpts  
from Nov. 24, 1969 Statement

On March 25, 1968, the Central Truong Bo Committee of the National Front for Liberation issued an emergency statement denouncing the American troops for massacring over 500 civilians in Son My village (Quang Ngai province) on March 16, 1968. By that time, the U.S. authorities sought every way to deny and cover the crime. But this heinous atrocity has now been exposed to the public and has been arousing a wave of indignation in the United States and the world. A number of Americans who took part in, or witnessed, the atrocious mass murder have valiantly revealed part of the reality.

Like the La Lang An, Krong H'ring, Tay Ninh, Thu Duc jail, Poulo Condor, and the Son My massacre, the case of Son My was but one of the innumerable abominable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam. They have put into operation a huge war machine to exterminate a nation of over 30 million people. They have strangled on a territory of only over 300,000 square kilometres a number of bombs greater than that used in World War II. They have killed all, burned all, destroyed all in their "pacification" raids throughout South Viet Nam. They have carried out B-52 carpet bombings and used napalm bombs and toxic chemicals to raze entire hamlets and entire areas in South Viet Nam. They have tortured and massacred in the most barbarous manner those arrested by them. The US war of aggression is a genocidal war against the Vietnamese people. This heinous crime, which will be forever cursed, has itself contradicted the professed US "defense of the freedom" and "respect for the right to self-determination" of the South Vietnamese people.

The Bertrand Russell International Tribunal and outstanding lawyers in the world and in the United States have come to the obvious conclusion that the US has committed the crime of war, the crime of genocide in Viet Nam. The Thieu-Ky-Khim puppet administration is a clique of traitors to the Vietnamese nation and is lending a hand to the US aggressors in massacring the South Vietnamese people and trying to cover up their crimes. The responsibility here is not only that of the criminals in Son My, of the US puppet troops having perpetrated crimes in South Viet Nam, of the American pilots having bombed and strafed the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, but also that of the US ruling circles who have unleashed a war of aggression against Viet Nam and committed innumerable and abominable crimes against the Vietnamese people.

To put an end to the US crimes against the Vietnamese people, the US aggressors must

(Continued page 2)

RECENT disclosures of the massacre of more than 500 civilians by American troops during a sweep in South Viet Nam on March 16, 1968 have deeply shocked the world and been severely censured by public opinion. This appalling incident occurred nearly 20 months ago. In its issues of April 22, 1968, No. 104 and May 27, 1968, No. 106 (see article entitled "Son My Mothers Call for Vengeance," Viet Nam Courier No. 106, reprinted in this issue, page 5) Viet Nam Courier had already brought this crime to light. Evidence so far published by US and other foreign newspapers and agencies has testified to the complete veracity of our story.

The New York Times, the International Herald Tribune, Life Magazine, the Plain Dealer, the Chicago Times, AP, UPI, AFP, Reuter, etc., have released detailed accounts of the massacre, photographs taken by Joseph Hachele, confessionals volunteered by GIs

involved like Paul Meadlo, Michael Bernhardt, Ronald Lee Rudolph, Charles A. West, Charles Grever, Michael B. Terry, and evidence supplied by survivors of the Son My massacre including 180-Hua, the Chuong Chue, Phan Dat and Do Ba (the latter during an interview showed his right hand with fingers blown off by a shot). All told of the same story which confirms the following facts, summarized by the South Viet Nam Committee to Denounce US-Puppets' War Crimes in its special communiqué issued on Nov. 24, 1969:

— US troops committed the massacre in Son My village on March 16, 1968.

— The troops involved had been ordered by US authorities to keep mum over the incident; there had been US command orders to wipe out all the village and its inhabitants.

— The villagers had not taken any hostile action, US troops set fire to houses,

rounded up the inhabitants in many groups and killed them with M-16 rifles and M-40 machine-guns.

— Victims of the massacre were civilians, old people, women and children, many of them sicklings.

— US troops did not leave the village until they had looted all the villagers' land.

— A few victims escaped because they were protected by other bushes on top of the hill.

THOUGH the GIs who took part in the massacre or witnessed it have substantiated the above-mentioned facts, the Saigon puppet regime and the US administration have been trying hard to play down the story.

The Thieu-Ky Khim puppet administration claimed it has also ordered an investigation into the Son My case, but 24 hours after the order,

(Continued page 4)

must also fight for their own defense and for the defense of human dignity and culture.

### SON MY MOTHERS CALL FOR VENGEANCE

THE Women's Committee for Liberation of Son My village, Son Tinh district, Quang Ngai province (South Viet Nam), has just denounced the massacre of 501 people, most of them women and children, perpetrated by US troops on March 16.

The unheard-of savagery and magnitude of the massacre were denounced in a letter sent to the F.A.A.F. fighters calling on them to exact vengeance. The letter gave the following details:

Vo Thi Phu, mother of a 12-month-old baby, was shot dead. She had only time to say to Tuoi, a 12-year-old girl, 'Tell my husband that we survive as children under the dove step and he should take good care of our child'. The baby which tried to suck at its mother's breast, died when it found only a pool of milk. The Young...

May 27 1968

No 166

5th Year

THE NAM COURIER

46 Iron Hung Do Street, Hanoi - Democratic Republic of Viet Nam

Little Lien took refuge in a trench with her grand parents. When her grand-mother was killed, she begged her grand-father to save her. She then fled to the...

Mr. XUAN THUY:

## THE SON MY CASE IS ONLY ONE OF THE INNUMERABLE CRIMES PERPETRATED BY THE US AGGRESSORS

AT the 44th session of the Paris Conference, Minister Xuan Thuy, head of the DRVN Government delegation, criticized the US government's plan for prolongation of the war as can be inferred from Mr. Xuan's November 3 speech and the statements of many personalities in the US administration, as well as recent US practical deeds.

He quoted US Defense Secretary M. Laird as saying on November 20 that the US would phase out US troop withdrawal in many years and even after the withdrawal of US combat troops, "support and training troops" would still remain in South Viet Nam. He also quoted Lt. Packard, US Deputy Defense Secretary, as saying in Saigon on November 21 that the US command in South Viet Nam would give priority to the "pacification" work and the development of the puppet army's military potentialities.

Thus, the DRVN chief negotiator emphasized, the Nixon administration still wants a military solution. It has been carrying out atrocious raids and bombardments against one area after another, perpetrating massacres not less bloody than in Son My and Ia Leng An. This clearly shows that the Nixon administration still cannot bring itself to withdraw all US troops from South Viet Nam, and seeks to prolong the war and the occupation of South Viet Nam by US troops.

Minister Xuan Thuy also condemned the US for stepping up its "special war" in Laos and unceasingly violating the territory and sovereignty of the Kingdom of Cambodia. He quoted Head of State Norodom Sihanouk's speech on November 22 and the *Pathet Lao* Radio's statement on the same day energetically protesting against the US and demand

ing it to put an end to its aggressive acts against the Cambodian, and Laotian peoples.

After referring to the American people's anti-Viet Nam war demonstrations on October 15 and November 15 and to universal outcries against the Son My wholesale murder, Mr. Xuan Thuy stressed that the Son My case was only one of the innumerable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors in South Viet Nam.

Refuting President Nixon's assertion that should the US troops withdraw from South Viet Nam, it would be a "disaster", Minister Xuan Thuy said:

"It is obvious that US troops, the puppet administration and army, and nobody else, have been savagely slaughtering South Vietnamese during the past 15 years. Should the US troops withdraw, there would no longer be such massacres."

## ABOUT LODGE AND WALSH'S RESIGNATION

CABOT Lodge and Lawrence E. Walsh have resigned respectively as chief and deputy-chief of the US delegation at the Paris Conference on Viet Nam, effective on December 8. Their resignations have been accepted by the US President.

Announcing this, the Nixon administration tried to produce the impression that it had come as a "surprise" to it. But the *Hill* said it "happily surprised anyone."

If the four-party conference on Viet Nam has not been able to move an inch so far, that is because of the stubbornness and perversity of the American side which has been persisting in its policy of war intensification and refusal to withdraw quickly and completely US and satellite troops from South Viet Nam and to let the South Viet Nam people settle themselves

their internal affairs. This policy of the US had been consistently followed by Cabot Lodge at the Paris Conference, sometimes with open cynicism. Yet, when tendering their resignations, Lodge and Walsh had the cheek to complain that "the Communists had refused to enter into serious negotiations at the Paris Conference."

On the other hand, in connection with Lodge and Walsh's move, public opinion in the world scored the US side's failure to prove its readiness to talk in good faith in Paris and attempt to "downgrade" the talks. In spite of White House spokesman Ziglar's denial, the *New York Times* on November 21 editorially commented that Lodge's resignation and President Nixon's apparent intention not to name a successor promptly "are disturbing signs that the administration

may be turning away from the Paris talks as a forum for ending the war."

As Le Quang Hiep, adviser to the delegation at the DRVN delegation at the Paris Conference, pointed out at a press conference on November 20, "the principal question is not a change of persons, but whether or not the US will really change its policy."

Le Quang Hiep said: "The principal question is that: the US must show goodwill and serious attitude: it must stop its aggression, withdraw quickly and completely its troops from South Viet Nam without laying down any condition; it must agree to the formation of a provisional coalition government in South Viet Nam. That is what really matters. Without such seriousness and good-will, nobody, whoever he may be, can solve the problem."

## Hanoi Press Opinion

### ON SATO'S TRIP TO WASHINGTON

THE Nixon-Sato talks marked a new, dangerous step of development of the US-Japan aggressive military alliance.

The US and Japanese ruling circles have been drumming about the US promise to "return Okinawa to Japan" as a gesture of "good will" of the US and an "achievement" of the Sato authorities.

This move cannot obscure the essence of the problem highlighted by the explosive political atmosphere in Tokyo and many other big cities of Japan, before Sato's departure to the US.

Nixon's assertion that "peace and progress in the Pacific depended on ever increasing co-operation between Japan and the United States", indicated the US intention to use Japan as the hard core and shock force in the realization of its "new policy", i.e. to step up the use of Asians to fight against the US.

As for Sato's claim that "co-operative relations between Tokyo and Washington are assuming ever greater importance for the maintenance of world peace", it only betrays Japan's scheme to take advantage of the US failures and difficulties in Viet Nam and Asia as a whole to improve its status in the "US-Japan alliance" for expansionist purposes.

The return of Okinawa to Japan as arranged by Nixon and Sato will lead to a more dangerous situation for the security of Japan. It will give the US the right to use freely the military bases in Japan including the Okinawa nuclear base, and make it possible for the Japanese ruling

circles to further strengthen their military alliance with the US and other satellites of the US in Asia. As commented on November 10 that the arrangement would permit the US to use Okinawa "as a nuclear springboard in case of extreme crisis in the Western Pacific."

US imperialism and the Japanese monopoly capital have agreed to extend the terms of the US-Japan Security Treaty which came into effect on Sept. 8, 1951 was recorded in the documentary *Independence Day*. With other films shot by fellow countrymen in France on the activities of the DRVN National Assembly Delegation in France and the DRVN Government Delegation in Fontainebleau, that first never had gone down in the history of Vietnamese cinema as the harbinger of the birth of cinematography in Viet Nam.

In 1948, in the stirring atmosphere of the nation-wide resistance against the enemy, and for the needs of the fighting, some professional cameramen created for themselves facilities for taking moving pictures and managed to shoot glimpses of the front and in the daily life of the people and armed forces in Nam Bo in the early stage of national effort. *The Mr. Hoa Battle*, *Yen Little, Tra Vinh Campaign*, *Red Cat Campaign*, *Printing in the Resistance*, *The 15th Army Group Workshop*, were newswires produced with most rudimentary means, "smelling of gunpowder" and soon were given a good reception by the masses for they gloriously raised their fighting spirit.

In 1950 the film makers of the North made the film *Dong Khé Battle* with direct shootings in the field to record the victory upon the Frontier Campaign.

Later, it was with the equipment supplied by our Soviet and Chinese friends and also with our own means, that our cameramen went to battle. One after the other, one could see the newswires and documentary films as *The Can-Hue-Lang Campaign*, *The Voluntary Army Carriers Going Up the Line*, *The National Congress of the Army and People's Militia Fighters*, *Victory in the North West*, *For the Defense of Their Village and Fatherland*, all these films marked a constant progress in photography, composition, etc.

(Continued page 7)

### DRVN FOREIGN MINISTRY SPOKESMAN DENIES US-CLAIMED "CONTACTS"

THE DRVN Foreign Ministry spokesman on Nov. 21 issued a statement refuting the US State Department's claim on November 20 that there had been recent "diplomatic contacts" between the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam "through other countries."

The above statement of the US State Department was another attempt of the Nixon administration to fool public opinion and dodge compliance with the pressing demand of the peoples in the US and the world for a speedy, total and unconditional withdrawal of US troops from South Viet Nam.

UNDER French rule, there was no film studio in our country. Some colonialists invested in film screening enterprises showing films hired from France, the US and other capitalist countries. A few firms also produced cheap feature films, newswires or documentary films commissioned by the colonial administration.

Vietnamese capitalists had shares in such ventures but as an even more limited role. Those among them who wanted to make progressive films were prevented from doing so by the colonial authorities. The predatory French capitalists were reluctant to risk big sums of money. Given the total scarcity of their theatres, for all Vietnamese went to the pictures each could only do so once every ten years.

The founding of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam on Sept. 2, 1945 was recorded in the documentary *Independence Day*. With other films shot by fellow countrymen in France on the activities of the DRVN National Assembly Delegation in France and the DRVN Government Delegation in Fontainebleau, that first never had gone down in the history of Vietnamese cinema as the harbinger of the birth of cinematography in Viet Nam.

In 1948, in the stirring atmosphere of the nation-wide resistance against the enemy, and for the needs of the fighting, some professional cameramen created for themselves facilities for taking moving pictures and managed to shoot glimpses of the front and in the daily life of the people and armed forces in Nam Bo in the early stage of national effort. *The Mr. Hoa Battle*, *Yen Little, Tra Vinh Campaign*, *Red Cat Campaign*, *Printing in the Resistance*, *The 15th Army Group Workshop*, were newswires produced with most rudimentary means, "smelling of gunpowder" and soon were given a good reception by the masses for they gloriously raised their fighting spirit.

In 1950 the film makers of the North made the film *Dong Khé Battle* with direct shootings in the field to record the victory upon the Frontier Campaign.

Later, it was with the equipment supplied by our Soviet and Chinese friends and also with our own means, that our cameramen went to battle. One after the other, one could see the newswires and documentary films as *The Can-Hue-Lang Campaign*, *The Voluntary Army Carriers Going Up the Line*, *The National Congress of the Army and People's Militia Fighters*, *Victory in the North West*, *For the Defense of Their Village and Fatherland*, all these films marked a constant progress in photography, composition, etc.

The *Dien Hieu Phu Victory* testified to the maturity of Viet Nam's cinema. This full-length documentary was made by our valiant cameramen who worked at the side of our soldiers at the front.

On March 11, 1951, President Ho Chi Minh signed a decree on the official establishment of the Vietnamese Cinema Department.

Revolution entered a new phase. Our cameramen returning from the battlefield locked down to filming new men who came to limelight in the front of production and national reconstruction and were ready for a new effort.

While formerly, our newswires and documentaries were able to reflect the important historic events in our war of resistance against French colonialism, today in socialist revolution, our documentary film makers display great militancy and shooting free pictures and men with a full life and not only general but also typical characters.

One of their achievements, *The Hoc-Hung-Hai Irrigation System*, was quite an epic of collective labor and patriotic movement. *Sea of Fire* is a true story of an attack against an enemy air base in the first year of the last resistance war. Such characters

as young Nam, young Toan in *The Young Girl at the Construction Site*, a young leader *Daung in Fire in Second Line*, little Ngin in *Fighting in the Mountains*, *The A Phu Couple*, young Van in *Storm is Rising*, the school mistress *Hanh* in the film of the same name, young Thuan in *The Woody Area of Young Thuan* are men and women who meet in daily life. When the film *Nguyen Van Trui* was screened two years after the death of that hero, one had the impression of having seen him somewhere in one's home.

Thus the ordinary life described and all problems dealt with in our feature films are all burning topics of the day.

Throughout the four years' fighting against air raids, there were hundreds of newswires and documentaries highlighting the revolutionary heroism of the Vietnamese people and their armed forces; most representative among them were *On Hillside Great*, *Prisoners*, *Ham Boing Fighters*, *Nguyen Van Trui*, *My Memory Will Never Die*, *Zero in on the Enemy*.

The Vietnamese cinema started from newswires and documentary films. This characteristic was the product of particular circumstances in our country and our people's combat needs. This new characteristic, one of the great qualities of our cinema, can be found in our feature films even since their inception. *The River Shores*, the first Vietnamese feature film, was screened on the occasion of the anniversary of our resistance for national revolution—July 20, 1959—and dealt with a subject relating to that struggle.

Since then, ten years have elapsed, and over thirty feature films have been produced, nearly all of which were linked with the resistance war against French colonialism and US imperialism or with socialist construction. *The Young Fighter* tells of the exploits of Cu Thinh Lan, a hero who, in the South Viet Nam film, jumps on French tanks to wipe them out, *Little Kim Dong* pictures the little roomers who, during the period of underground activities, disguised themselves by his great fortitude. Young Ngin in *Fighting Village* personalities Phap Thi Vach, a labour heroine who has achieved feat in hydraulic work, *Mistress on the High Peak* relates the life of Tu Thi Khinh, a school mistress of the Tay national and outstanding lighter of the patriotic emulation movement. *Sea of Fire* is a true story of an attack against an enemy air base in the first year of the last resistance war. Such characters

AT present, the Vietnamese cinema, though still having scanty resources, is possessed of some material and technical foundation. One can hardly have an idea of the difficulties it encountered in its heroic days. At that time, in the resistance zone of Nam Bo (South Viet Nam) films and cameras had to be bought from enemy-occupied areas. Big pits served as dark rooms in which one had to work for hours running; to maintain a temperature required film processing. The ice should also be brought from enemy-controlled towns. When an enemy raid took place, the "studio" must be evacuated on small craft to the Plain of Keels or the I Minh jungle where work was continued.

In North Viet Nam, after the Frontier Campaign, we received aid from the Soviet Union, People's China and other friendly countries. We had to rely mainly on our

All our difficulties are not yet overcome, but we are now able to turn out production apparatuses and general equipment of international standards, and most of the parts of a camera.

We devote now our efforts to establishing a Vietnamese cinema having a revolutionary, national, scientific and modern character.

While before the national Resistance War (Dec. 1940), we had only one mobile projection team active in the provinces lying between Hanoi and Phu Yen with apparatuses to screen the 16-mm films on the activities of the DRVN National Assembly Delegation in France and the Government's Delegation in Fontainebleau, we have now some teams operating all over North Viet Nam. With a very handy luggage carried on bicycles or mostly pack-back, the members of the teams circled the country from the

## The Vietnamese Cinema, A Nascent and Lively Art

by XUAN TRUONG  
Vice-Minister of Culture

own means. The "studios" were housed in bamboo huts deep in the jungle; some "parapets" such as a sound recorder for 16mm films were very few. The studios are now still useful in South Viet Nam liberated areas.

lowlands to the uplands, from the seacoast to the hinterland to entertain the people. Thus even the minority nationalities in the remoted parts of our country see the films. Fishermen attend film shows on their own craft.

During the four years of

(Continued page 7)



A shot from the film  
Toward the Fire Line

# A Horrible Crime

(Continued from page 1)

the Saigon Defense Ministry on Nov. 22 published a communiqué, shamelessly contradicting reports and photographs from Western news agencies, were "completely inaccurate." IFP sarcastically commented, "This means investigators had to go to Quang Nam province, carry out their inquiry and return to Saigon to prepare a report, all in a record time." While their top dogs were telling such lies, Tom Thoi Khien, puppet chief of Quang Nam province, admitted that last year, the inhabitants, dominated by a militantly anti-French military unit for having deliberately killed 600 civilians in Truong An village, Son My area.

For their part, US rulers at first made vague statements, saying they would make "further comment" if they did not have "sufficient information," while Bomber and Aircom even had the cheek to state that "the US government does not condone atrocities." Grim faces, however, have given them the lie. On Nov. 21, the US Army Department acknowledged that Lieutenant William Aley alone had murdered 160 South Vietnamese at Son My in March last year. Washington has planned to take legal action against him. By so doing it intends to make a scapegoat of a low-ranking officer, giving the Son My affair as an individual act of his. Far from that, there is ample evidence that Aley and his colleagues had slaughtered people on orders. The Chicago Sun Times quoted on Nov. 21, Charles A. Wood, 24, who was then a sergeant and who took part in the Son My mass murder as saying that the order to carry it out had come from the division level.

UNDER fire at home and abroad, on Nov. 20, Nixon made public a White House statement on the Son My wholesale murder. He hypocritically condemned "alleged" massacre of a number of South Vietnamese civilians by a US army officer, regarding it as "a direct violation of US military policy" to be "infringed with impunity." On the other hand, the statement said, this incident had occurred before Nixon took office and that the present Defense Secretary had known nothing about it.

Nixon is attempting to shrug off his responsibility, but to no avail. Everybody still remembers that in early April this year, Nixon, as the new White House boss, declared, "I have not ordered and do not intend to order a reduction in our activities" (New York Times, April 13, 1969). He and his Defense Secretary Melvin Laird have been carrying on Johnson's old policy of "exerting maximum

military pressure" and ineffectually, such a policy leads to Son My-type horrors. As pointed out by the DRVN Foreign Ministry in its Nov. 20 statement, "the massacre of Son My is but the latest of the innumerable abominable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam." If Nixon wants to have ample evidence of the crimes committed by the US and its stooges in South Viet Nam since he came into power, there will be no difficulty in getting it. Public opinion had recently raised an outcry and voiced indignation over the "Green Berets" affair which the Nixon administration had tried to whitewash with a drawn-out investigation designed to minimize its involvement. The brutal torturing and murdering of 1,400 female political prisoners at Thung Lai jail and the murder of a number of them are further proofs. The report from the "US Study Team on Religious and Political Freedom in Viet Nam" has thrown some light on this case and on many other crimes being committed in South Viet Nam, and Washington has planned to take legal action against him. By so doing it intends to make a scapegoat of a low-ranking officer, giving the Son My affair as an individual act of his. Far from that, there is ample evidence that Aley and his colleagues had slaughtered people on orders. The Chicago Sun Times quoted on Nov. 21, Charles A. Wood, 24, who was then a sergeant and who took part in the Son My mass murder as saying that the order to carry it out had come from the division level.

THE US war of aggression in South Viet Nam must be brought to an end for no more Son My to happen. If Nixon refuses to end it, then the Vietnamese people, supported by peace and justice lovers round the world, will fight on to force him to comply.

THE US war of aggression in South Viet Nam must be brought to an end for no more Son My to happen. If Nixon refuses to end it, then the Vietnamese people, supported by peace and justice lovers round the world, will fight on to force him to comply.



Do Da, one of the survivors of the Son My massacre, clutching his brother-in-law's hand.

Two Years after the Second Session of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal (Nov. 20, 1957)

## THE DOSSIER OF US WAR CRIMES GROWS EVER THICKER

EDITOR'S NOTE: We reprint below, in a slightly abridged form and with sub-headings added by us, a statement of the Commission for Investigation of the US Imperialist War Crimes in Viet Nam on the occasion of the second anniversary of the second session of the Bertrand Russell International War Crimes Tribunal.



GLs of First Air Mobile Division setting fire to dwellings near Tay Ky (Quang Nam province) in October 1967.

TWO years ago, after the Stockholm judgment (Sweden, May 1967) on the crime of aggression committed by the US against the Viet Nam people, the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal in its second session in Ruskhile (Denmark) condemned the US imperialist aggressors for having, in defiance of all laws on warfare, used and experimented in Viet Nam people, against civilians, for having committed the crime against humanity and the crime of genocide against the

Viet Nam people. In the same session, the Tribunal also came to the conclusion that the US had committed the crime of aggression against the Viet Nam people, the Bertrand Russell International Tribunal in its second session in Ruskhile (Denmark) condemned the US imperialist aggressors for having, in defiance of all laws on warfare, used and experimented in Viet Nam people, against civilians, for having committed the crime against humanity and the crime of genocide against the

tion at the Paris peace talks. Nixon's November 1 speech which we can negotiate from strength." More than a month after, on May 23, 1969, the US Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, in an interview with an IFP correspondent, stated: "It has always been our goal to keep the maximum pressure on the enemy." Nixon's November 1 speech which we can negotiate from strength." More than a month after, on May 23, 1969, the US Defense Secretary Melvin Laird, in an interview with an IFP correspondent, stated: "It has always been our goal to keep the maximum pressure on the enemy."

However, during the past years, disregarding public opinion in the world and in America itself, the US ruling circles before and the Nixon government at present, after to months in power, have been stepping up and prolonging the criminal war of aggression in Viet Nam.

AS generally known, in early April this year, Nixon declared, "I have not ordered and do not intend to order a reduction in our activities" (New York Times, April 13, 1969). Presidential press secretary Ronald Ziegler specified that "the White House says the US has no plan to reduce its military operations in South Viet Nam." Such statements laid bare US intention to obtain some military successes and secure a position of strength to negotiate from. Indeed at the press conference held by the White House on April 13, 1969, Nixon and his Defense Secretary Melvin Laird have been carrying on Johnson's old policy of "exerting maximum

pressure" and ineffectually, such a policy leads to Son My-type horrors. As pointed out by the DRVN Foreign Ministry in its Nov. 20 statement, "the massacre of Son My is but the latest of the innumerable abominable crimes perpetrated by the US aggressors and their lackeys in South Viet Nam." If Nixon wants to have ample evidence of the crimes committed by the US and its stooges in South Viet Nam since he came into power, there will be no difficulty in getting it. Public opinion had recently raised an outcry and voiced indignation over the "Green Berets" affair which the Nixon administration had tried to whitewash with a drawn-out investigation designed to minimize its involvement. The brutal torturing and murdering of 1,400 female political prisoners at Thung Lai jail and the murder of a number of them are further proofs. The report from the "US Study Team on Religious and Political Freedom in Viet Nam" has thrown some light on this case and on many other crimes being committed in South Viet Nam, and Washington has planned to take legal action against him. By so doing it intends to make a scapegoat of a low-ranking officer, giving the Son My affair as an individual act of his. Far from that, there is ample evidence that Aley and his colleagues had slaughtered people on orders. The Chicago Sun Times quoted on Nov. 21, Charles A. Wood, 24, who was then a sergeant and who took part in the Son My mass murder as saying that the order to carry it out had come from the division level.

THE Women's Committee for Liberation of Son My village, Son Tuh district, Quang Nam province (South Viet Nam), has just denounced the massacre of 502 people, most of them women and children, perpetrated by US troops on March 16.

The unheard-of savagery and magnitude of the massacre were denounced in a letter sent to the PLAF fighters calling on them to exact vengeance. The letter gave the following details:

"At 6:30 a.m. on March 16, 1968, all the enemy batteries installed around Son My started pounding the village for more than half an hour. The eleven choppers came in, strafing the locality and leading American troops whose saucery intrusion was visible on their faces. They shot at all that came in sight: men, women, children, elderly people, plants and animals, and destroyed everything: crops, fruit-trees, houses..."

"The inhabitants who were going about their work,

Mrs Mot sitting on the edge of a shelter, and called to her: the old woman had received a bullet in the forehead and had died. Little Lien also found the inert body of Mrs Mink, her head lolling against the shelter wall, her eyes staring. She ran towards Mrs Ngau: that pregnant woman died after she had been raped by the GLs. Her four children were also killed on the edge of their shelter. Then Lien rushed to Mrs Vo Thi Mai who had just had her baby; she was dead, and her child in an agitated state by her.

"Lien rushed from place to place, shouting at the top of her voice, but got no reply; she only saw dead bodies and burning huts. Never will she forget such horrible scenes on their faces. They shot at all that came in sight: men, women, children, elderly people, plants and animals, and destroyed everything: crops, fruit-trees, houses..."

"After rapings to death Mrs Suan, a neighbor, the aggressors made a deep slash in her body with a bayonet. Mrs Lien who hid in a

## SON MY SURVIVORS SPEAK OUT

HERE are some excerpts from a letter signed by Pham Tho, 60, Mrs Pham Thi Hoa, 35, Miss Nguyen Thi Hoa, 18, Pham Thi Mai, 13 years old, of Khe Thuan hamlet, Son My village, survivors of the Son My massacre and released by Gial Phong Press Agency in May 1968:

"The time: 6 a.m., the day, March 16, 1968.

"The people in our village were preparing for a busy day. Suddenly, US artillery from the Binh Mount, the Binh Lien position and the Quang Nam military sector pounded the village with violence. After this, dozens of US helicopters heavily loaded with GLs arrived. The GLs got out of the helicopters and divided themselves into three groups respectively for three jobs: to burn houses and destroy people's property; to arrest the inhabitants; and to cut down trees, destroy orchards and kill the cattle..."

"The GLs attacked one house after another, one shelter after another, with tear grenades, dynamite and gun fire, killing many people inside. Other people were marched off. Some were shot dead just while the column was moving. The others were herded on the bank of a canal. Over 100 people, mostly aged people, women and children were cut down with

machine-gun, or mortar fire. The victims fell down one upon another. The few of us survived the massacre, because we were protected by the corpses above us."

"We were also eye-witness of other crimes. Mr Truong Tho, 74 years old, was savagely beaten up by a soldier with his hand was knocked off. He afterwards was thrown into a well, and finished with grenades and anti-machin-gun fire. Little Thi Nguyen, 12 years old, was raped and bayoneted to death. Pham Thi Mai, 35 years old, was raped and locked up in a barn which was set on fire."

"Within one hour, US troops slaughtered 500 people in Khe Thuan hamlet including 67 aged people and 170 children from one to 15 years of age. The rest were women, two of them far on in their time."

"12 families were exterminated. All the seven members of Mr Le Ly's family including four children, the youngest barely 4 years old, were massacred. In one case, the raiders killed a whole family save a baby. The US troops also burned hundreds of houses, and moved down hundreds of cattle..."

"During the massacre, 57 people in our hamlet were killed, 6 others wounded. Among the dead were 4 old people, 33 children from 1 to 15 years of age and one expectant mother. The enemy also burned hundreds of houses, and many fishing boats."

"NOTHING better also released by Gial Phong Press Agency was signed



US First Air Mobile Division men using poison gases in a "sweep" at Que Son (Quang Nam province)

## SON MY MOTHERS CALL FOR VENGEANCE

(Reprinted from Viet Nam Courier No 66, May 27, 1968)

etting off for market or for fishing, had hardly time to run to safety when the GLs came and fell on them."

"Vo Thi Phao, mother of a 12-month-old baby, was shot dead. She had only time to say to Tuoi, a 12-year-old girl, 'Tell my husband that my savings are hidden under the door step and he should take good care of our child.' The baby, which tried to suck at its mother's breast, died when it found only blood instead of milk. The Yankee got angry and shouted 'Viet Cong, Viet Cong' and heaped abuse on mother and baby and set fire to it."

"Other GLs pulled Mai and Mot out of their trench, beat them, then threw them into the same trench and left it up with a mine: the two women and four children of theirs are killed."

"In another shelter, Mrs Truong and her four children were found dead. Their bodies lay in pools of blood and were horribly mauled by a mine explosion. One, a girl, tried to escape, but was killed at the entrance of his shelter."

"Little Lien took refuge in a trench with her grand-parents. When her grand-mother was killed, she was so afraid to move to another shelter that she stayed in her trench. She was also dead. French-soldiers, she ran to Mrs Mai and Mrs Thi, the first old women, but found them killed together with eight other people."

"In another house, she saw

(To be continued)

VIET NAM COURIER

VIET NAM COURIER







Corpsmen of the Ho Chi Minh province have discovered a chopper with ten bodies.

## Military Operations

- 3,280 Enemy Casualties in Bu Prang—Duc Lap Sector, Northeast of Saigon in 25 Days.
- 500 Adverse Troops Wiped Out in a Week around Bu Dop.
- In a Small Sector of My Tho Province, Mekong Delta, 620 Puppet Soldiers Knocked Out in 4 Days.

SINCE the third week of November, the PLAF have achieved important successes on the fronts Northeast and Southwest of Saigon. *Truth* Press Agency reported.

### NORTHEAST OF SAIGON

**PLAF** pressure on regional forces around Special Forces camp at Bu Prang, 125 km north-northeast of Saigon. From Nov. 17 to 20, PLAF artillery pounded the camp five times, setting on fire a fuel depot, 15 barracks, disabling 50 adverse troops and blowing 4 choppers.

On Nov. 20, southwest of Bu Prang, Battalion 2, puppet Regiment 47, 4000 hit, lost 120 men. From Nov. 21 to 23, two battalions of puppet Regiment 51 suffered 100 casualties and had 5 heavy guns and mortars destroyed and 17 helicopters downed in 4 days.

Meanwhile, the PLAF hammered at the enemy in Duc Lap region, 37 km northeast of Bu Prang. In total, in the Bu Prang—Duc Lap sector, between October 28 and November 21, PLAF men put out of action 2,250 enemy men, wiped out or badly maimed a battalion group, 3 regimental CPs and 5 battalions, wrecked 90 military trucks and 25 guns and mortars, downed 50 planes and helicopters and seized 200 firearms including 400 mm and 155 mm cannons. Fighting is going on.

asken southwest of Bu Prang, the puppet forces were very active in Bu Dop region, 120 km north-northeast of Saigon. From Nov. 14 to 20, they inflicted 500 casualties on the enemy, chiefly on the CPs of the First Cav, destroyed 41 military vehicles, mostly armored cars, and grounded 6 choppers.

At Cam Xa, 65 km north-northeast of Saigon, 4 choppers were downed and a toll of 50 enemy troops was exacted in two engagements on Nov. 16 and 18.

### SOUTHWEST OF SAIGON

ON the left bank of the Mekong, the PLAF launched from Nov. 17 to 20 violent attacks in My Tho province: Cai Lay and Cai Be subsector (CPs 170 km and 88 km southwest of Saigon) and the military units along Highway No. 4 (Saigon to the Mekong Delta) were bombarded, 210 adverse soldiers, 16 military vehicles and 4 heavy guns put out of action. On Nov. 18, 4 battalions of puppet Infantry Division 7 and regional forces badly battered near Cai Lay sustained the loss of one battalion of regular troops, 100 dead and 100 firearms and 50 men taken prisoner.

### OTHER SECTORS

In the Western High Plateau, on Nov. 16, 18 and 20, many motorized columns intercepted on Road No. 19 between Pleiku and An Khê, 45 vehicles and 100 adverse soldiers wiped out and a chopper downed.

North of the High Plateau, the CP of puppet Regiment 12 at Tan Canh, 39 km north-northeast of Khammou was bombarded ten times between Nov. 21 and 23, and an encirclement of US Infantry Division 4, 30 km northwest of Pleiku, stormed; 14 military vehicles and 4 heavy guns knocked out of action.

Western agencies reported that between Nov. 23 and 27 the PLAF remained very active and inflicted heavy punishment on the US and puppet troops:

— Shelling Buon Hoa air base, and 5 US artillery positions near Bu Dop and Bu Prang camp (morning of Nov. 23) and Duc Lap subsector (CP Nov. 27).

Ground assaults on elements of US Infantry Division 1 near Pleiku (Nov. 21 and 22) on an armored column of 300 vehicles of the First Cav, near Sang Be and on a battalion of puppet Infantry Division 11 near Kham Lee on Nov. 22. The latter unit was whittled down while enemy aircraft coming to rescue it mistakenly hit at the survivors, who took 31 casualties including a battalion commander and American advisors.

Staging two coups de main on a unit of US Armored Regiment 11 in Tay Ninh province on Nov. 20, destroying many dozen vehicles including Sherman tanks and fully loaded trucks and causing serious losses to the enemy.

## A FIGHTER'S RECOLLECTION

# HO CHI MINH, Your Name Inspires Them with Awe!

WE fell into the hands of the enemy. They used most atrocious kinds of torture to bring us to our knees. They ordered us to salute the "three-stripe" flag (1). As we said "no" with a grin, they pounced upon us, gave us a good hiding and pounded us up in a dark cell without giving us any food nor allowing us to wash.

All of us, some dozen women, shared a small room filled with an offensive stench and received a sound beating every few hours. Suddenly a thrill voice rose among us:

"Ho Chi Minh, you appear like a twinkling star and relieve the people's sufferings." (2)

The song was taken up by other women and spread to nearby wards. There, it was sung by men and interspersed with "Death with terror!" "Upon with repression of women!" shouts.

"The more we sang, the more the image of Uncle Ho became vivid in our minds as if he were there witnessing our facing up to the enemy. The song gave us additional strength. Though manhandled and with arms and teeth broken and discolored hair caked with blood, we stood the trial stoically, while our torturers were frenziedly howling insults at and scolding us as to be lost as roaring like beasts. Firm as blocks of steel, we went on chanting:

"Long live Ho Chi Minh, Liberator of the people!" These words testified in us more confidence and we looked straight in their faces, scanning each line with pride. Our torturers' hearts retreat and crumbled as soon as they reached the door of the cell.

A short pudgy officer threatened us: "I'll make you sing tomorrow, if you don't, you'll die."

The next morning, they came and drove us out in the courtyard. Standing astride

near a flag pole, the officer shouted: "Sing in praise of President Ngo!" (3)

Silence. He reported his words and signalled in with a stick other things with ribbs. All of a sudden, Sister Muoi broke off the ribbs and came up to him. She rolled up her left sleeve, letting bare three words: "Ho Chi Minh" tattooed on her arm.

A Vietnamese woman never goes in for tattooing, but Sister Muoi had spent many hours marking her arm in order, she said, "to keep Uncle Ho near us in time of his picture."

The officer growled, astonished by such boldness. In a low but firm voice she gave a clear-cut reply: "I've done it, I know how to sing it."

"Why?" asked the officer. "I think you know, it's very well. Have you been torturing us these last four or five years for something else?" she said. Then she raised her left arm showing him the tattoo.

He yanked out a knife, grasped her arm and threatened: "I'll remove it."

She smiled contemptuously and said: "I hope you carry out your threat, you who have cut the flesh of so many people among us. But if your tale of the 'inception' I'll make another here, and she pointed her finger to her chest."

The officer let go her arm and strode away infuriated.

That afternoon, the ponder of her right arm another invention: "Keep up our dignity as revolutionaries!"

The courageous and simple deed of Sister Muoi—an ordinary woman of South Viet Nam—has been commented on admirably by everyone.

(1) Flag of the Saigon administration.

(2) In a song glorifying President Ho Chi Minh by Lam Huu Phuc.

(3) The story occurred under Ngo Dinh Diem's regime.